

# Special Olympics Ohio

## Purpose

The mission of Special Olympics Ohio is to provide year-round sports training and competition opportunities for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

The concept of Special Olympics began in the early 1960s when Eunice Kennedy Shriver started a day camp for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The first national meet was held in 1968 for 1,000 athletes from the U.S. and Canada. Shortly thereafter, Ohio began a Special Olympics program under the name of the Ohio Athletic Association.

Special Olympics Ohio became incorporated in 1975. Today, there are Special Olympics programs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and 150 different countries around the world.



## Impact

Special Olympics contributes to the physical, social, and psychological development of the athletes. Through successful experiences in sports, they gain confidence and build a positive self-image which carries over into the classroom, home, job and community.

Special Olympics Ohio has approximately 200 local member organizations and over 23,000 athletes who are in training and competition. These organizations originate from county boards of DD, public schools, developmental centers, parks and recreation departments, churches and parent and community groups.

Special Olympics Ohio, Inc. is a non-profit corporation funded through private and corporate donations and fundraising projects across the state.

## Ohio State Colleges/Units Involved

Department of Recreational Sports  
Department of Athletics

## Community Partners Involved

The Kroger Company  
Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio  
Ohio State Moose Association  
Knights of Columbus  
Ohio Mills Corporation



## Contact

Kate Burdett  
Marketing & Development Manager  
Special Olympics Ohio  
[kburdett@sooh.org](mailto:kburdett@sooh.org)  
[www.soo.org](http://www.soo.org)

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